



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

ICE INVESTIGATION LEADS TO THE ARREST OF A CLEANING SERVICE OPERATOR AND 57 ILLEGAL ALIENS

Operator charged with bribing a federal officer and knowingly employing illegal aliens

BOSTON, MA - A 38-year-old citizen of Brazil was arrested here Tuesday and charged with bribing a federal immigration official and with knowingly hiring unauthorized aliens for his cleaning business following an investigation conducted by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and ICE's Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR).

The investigation results were announced jointly today by United States Attorney Michael J. Sullivan; Robin M. Avers, special agent-in-charge of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in New England; and Steven Mocsary, acting special agent-in-charge of the ICE Office of Professional Responsibility, East Region.

A federal complaint was unsealed today charging Jose Neto, of 33 Blaine Street, Allston, Massachusetts.

According to an affidavit submitted in support of the complaint, Neto was among approximately 700 suspected foreign nationals who were directed to report to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in the wake of an investigation into the fraudulent sale of identity records. When Neto reported to the ICE office, he offered to pay the interviewing agent a bribe to assist Neto and his wife with their immigration status. The ICE agent, operating undercover, arranged to meet Neto at a nearby mall. During the meeting, which was audio and video taped, Neto paid the agent \$20,000 in cash and clarified that, in exchange, he expected green cards (i.e. documentation for legal permanent residency) for himself and his wife.

In subsequent meetings Neto paid the ICE agent additional bribes of \$4,000 and \$5,000 to secure the release of illegal aliens who had previously been taken into ICE custody. One of these individuals was an employee of Neto's company, Spectro Cleaning Services based out of Neto's home at 33 Blaine Street in Allston.

ICE and OPR agents also arrested over 57 illegal aliens who worked for Neto at Spectro Cleaning Services.

"A primary mission of ICE is to restore integrity to the immigration System by disrupting and dismantling the criminal networks that compromise our national security," stated ICE Special Agent-in-Charge Avers. "This case shows how extensive the impact of criminal networks can be on our nation's immigration system. ICE will continue to vigorously pursue the individuals and criminal enterprises that seek to profit from weakening our nation's borders."

"Immigration laws exist to protect American citizens and the U.S. Attorney's Office is committed to working with our partners in law enforcement to ensure that they are upheld," stated U.S. Attorney Sullivan. "It is understandable that many from around the globe would want to come to live, work and raise families in the greatest democracy in the world. However, this must be done in compliance with United States immigration laws - not in violation of them. Individuals or companies who violate our laws and immigration process will be prosecuted."

Neto is currently being held, pending a bail and probable case hearing that is scheduled for Monday, March 21 at 11:00 a.m. before U.S. Magistrate Judge Robert B. Collings.

If convicted, Neto faces up to 15 years' imprisonment on the bribery charges, up to 5 years' imprisonment on the charges of inducing aliens to remain in the United States illegally, and up to 6 months' imprisonment for knowingly hiring unauthorized aliens.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Paul Levenson in Sullivan's Public Corruption Unit is handling the prosecution of this case.

The details contained in the complaint are allegations. The defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

#ICE#

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.